

working to reverse or counter OPEC's production cutbacks which began last spring and which have let the prices spiral get out of hand. As I said, the Administration should have been pressuring OPEC countries five or six months ago to reduce prices. I concluded my remarks in Committee by stating that the American people are now stuck with higher prices for gasoline, diesel fuel and heating oil for at least the next half year because "the Administration was asleep at the switch" and didn't take energetic and prudent actions. If there is any blame to be distributed at the Federal level, the American people should know it falls on the Administration.

NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY
AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I rise in opposition to the Nuclear Waste Amendments Act of 2000. This bill will establish the largest nuclear waste shipping program in U.S. history. It also endangers the health of our citizens and the environmental integrity of our lands. I cannot in good conscience support a bill that undermines the welfare of our people to provide the expeditious disposal of nuclear waste.

This bill continues to support interim storage of nuclear waste and does not provide the utilities the choice of interim storage in Nevada so that they can begin to remove waste from reactors and Department of Defense sites around the country by the year 2003. Pursuant to this measure, nuclear waste would be shipped to Yucca Mountain before the permanent construction of a repository. We should not place the lives of innocent people in jeopardy prior to the completion of a permanent repository. The safety of human life should be our number one priority not the premature removal of extremely dangerous nuclear waste.

Furthermore, this bill if passed will initiate the shipment of nuclear waste shipments with extraordinary amounts of radioactivity by rail and truck. This activity will potentially expose 50 million people to high levels of radiation for over 30 years. Our Nation's localities are not trained nor equipped to deal with a serious radioactive contamination event. Response teams in our nation's hospitals, police forces, firemen, and schools would be placed in an unfortunate position resulting in human suffering. We should not support a bill that does not provide for the training, equipment, and study needed to give the public reasonable assurances that their children will be safe from any possibility of radiation exposure due to a nuclear waste accident.

This bill also seeks to undermine the EPA's ability to set strong radiation standards. The measure delays the proposed standard of 15 milirems for a year until the next President takes office. The EPA can only issue a standard before the year's end if the Nuclear Regulatory Commission [NRC] agrees; however, the NRC proposes standards that do not provide adequate drinking water protections.

Finally, the selection of the Yucca Mountain site as the nuclear repository was a poor choice. Yucca Mountain happens to be located in an active earthquake zone. An earthquake registering 5.6 on the Richter scale in Yucca Mountain caused \$1 million worth of damage to an Energy Department field office near the repository site. Imagine what would happen if nuclear waste was stored in the mountain. It is even possible for radiation to contaminate drinking water for the region for years to come.

For these important reasons, I cannot support the Nuclear Waste Amendments Act of 2000. The people of this country deserve better.

HONORING AVA DONER

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2000

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor Ava Doner, a pioneer in business from my district. Ava recently passed away after a long and illustrious career as president and founder of Engineering Associates.

Ava, a leading figure in the Los Angeles business community, led the way for women for over 50 years, opening doors of opportunity in fields from drafting and design to all disciplines of engineering support services and transportation. Ava was always available to assist young, working women. She helped establish organizations to encourage the growth and development of aspiring women entrepreneurs and found time to support them during her entire career.

She was an active member of the business community and her efforts did not go unnoticed. Some of the commendations she received during her distinguished career included the 1999 Small Business Administration Woman Business Advocate of the Year, the City of Los Angeles Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Los Angeles Woman Business Owner of the Year. She was also the first recipient of the first Women's Referral Service "Ava Doner Pioneer Award," named for her in recognition of her contributions and leadership as a woman pioneer in business.

Ava Doner touched the lives of many women in the working world, leaving a lasting impression upon the business community. Ava will be dearly missed, but her legacy will live on.

WILLIAM CRAWFORD WAS TRULY
A HERO

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask that we all pause a moment to remember a true American hero, Mr. William Crawford. Though he is gone, he will live on in the hearts of all who knew him and be remembered for long years by many who didn't.

During World War II, William fought for our country while he served in the Army. Mr. Crawford's bravery as an Army private in World War II led to him becoming the first of Pueblo's four Medal of Honor recipients. Racing through heavy gunfire and detonating hand grenades on enemy gun sites, Mr. Crawford exemplified bravery. In 1945, he was captured by German troops and was presumed dead. As a result, his father received the Medal of Honor on his behalf. However, later that year, Mr. Crawford was rescued from the German troops. In 1947, he re-enlisted in the Army and served until 1967.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Crawford was a model American, embodying patriotism, strength, gentleness and service throughout his lifetime. William will be missed by all of us. Hopefully, we can learn from the example that William Crawford has set.

MARCH SCHOOL OF THE MONTH

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2000

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to name Lawrence Middle School in Lawrence as the School of the Month in the fourth congressional district for March 2000. Lawrence Middle School principal is Dr. Mark Kavarsky, and Superintendent of Schools is Dr. Paul Kelleher.

I chose Lawrence Middle as the March School of the Month because the school provides educational activities before school, during school and after school. I'm working on an amendment to this year's education bill to bolster after school programs, and Lawrence is a perfect model of how to help kids learn all day.

The mission of the Lawrence Public Schools is to ensure all learners reach their highest individual potential, through an academically rigorous educational system that inspires lifelong learning; focuses on creative, student-centered teaching and learning; and enables all to possess the confidence and abilities to meet life's challenges.

Lawrence Middle teaches 900 children in grades 6, 7 and 8. Two years ago I was the guest of honor—and first elected official—at Lawrence's Long Island Middle School Forum, where representatives from the middle schools in the 4th congressional district debated and discussed legislative issues.

When I visited Lawrence, I was impressed with how knowledgeable our kids are about the legislative process. It's vital we encourage government participation at such a young age.

In addition to their top academic activities, the youth at Lawrence Middle are civic-minded, participating in the Service Learning Club where the youth collect toiletries, clothes and other items to give to the homeless. An innovative way Lawrence teaches the kids about wastefulness is "Wrap It Up"—when students collect and wrap all leftover food from the cafeteria and other school events. This food is then forwarded to local food kitchens to provide for the needy in the Long Island community.

The School of the Month program highlights schools with outstanding students, teachers and administrators. Each month, McCarthy will recognize a different school that demonstrates a unique contribution to Long Island education.

TRIBUTE TO REV. DR. HERBERT D. VALENTINE

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2000

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the work and life of the Rev. Dr. Herbert D. Valentine, who next month will be retiring as the Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of Baltimore.

Dr. Valentine has held the position of Executive Presbyter for 23 years, serving his faith and his convictions. Dr. Valentine has been instrumental in working for better human rights policy, for better treatment of children and families and policies that speak to the better side of our nature. His work in Baltimore has spoken to the needs and aspirations of all peoples, near and far.

Dr. Valentine's commitment to strengthening ecumenical and interfaith relationships was recognized by the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council in 1995 with their Bryce Shoemaker Ecumenical Leadership Award. Prior to that, Dr. Valentine was honored by the Presbytery when he was elected to serve as moderator of their 203rd General Assembly in 1991-1992. In this capacity, Dr. Valentine traveled around the world representing Presbyterians and sharing his faith.

Throughout his lifetime, Dr. Valentine has demonstrated deep concern for all victims of oppression and injustice, not only in Baltimore but throughout the global community, especially in Central America. A visit from Dr. Valentine and other members of the Baltimore Presbytery, always meant that I would get educated as to the needs of people in distress or despair. We agreed more often than not as to the action our country had to take to assist these efforts to elevate the condition of all peoples.

Dr. Valentine's strong faith and advocacy will be missed, but I am sure he would not be leaving without a well trained and compassionate replacement—I know his coworkers are well prepared to continue his work. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Dr. Valentine for his service to his faith and his community and to wish him fair winds and a following sea as he enjoys his retirement.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA POLICE RETIREMENT EQUALITY ACT OF 2000

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2000

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the District of Columbia Police Retirement

Equality Act of 2000, a bill to provide equity in retirement benefits for Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) officers. This bill would correct an inequity by granting MPD officers and increase in retirement benefits based on the value of longevity bonus pay comparable to those received by D.C. firefighters.

Longevity pay, adopted by the District in 1972, is a bonus granted to both police officers and firefighters, in addition to base salary, as a retention incentive after officers reach milestones in service of fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, and thirty years. A D.C. firefighter, whose retirement benefits are identical in every other aspect to those of a MPD officer, receives a retirement annuity based on the combined value of base salary and longevity bonus pay. An MPD officer's retirement annuity is based only on base salary, not the longevity bonus, and is therefore lower than that of a D.C. firefighter. This benefit was negotiated by D.C. firefighters as part of a 1993 collective bargaining agreement. By 1995, MPD officials were not able to negotiate the same benefit because the District had entered into financial crisis and was essentially insolvent. The District has recovered and has had balanced budgets and surpluses for three years. MPD officers attempted to gain equal retirement benefits with D.C. firefighters through the 1997 Revitalization Act, in which the federal government assumed full responsibility for the District's unfunded pension liability for teacher's, firefighters and police officers. At that time, Representative CONNIE MORELLA, who is an original cosponsor of this bill and has constituents affected by this inequity, introduced legislation similar to the bill I introduced today. That bill was not adopted at that time.

Since then, the Council, the Mayor, and the control board have agreed to pay for this increased annuity benefit if the federal government agrees to pay for the portion of the program that would have been incurred prior to the 1997 Revitalization Act and therefore assumed by the federal government as is the case with firefighters.

This bill amends the 1997 Revitalization Act by authorizing the federal government to pay for the additional pension liability accrued prior to 1997 for police officers. The city will pay for the increased benefits accrued since the 1997 Revitalization Act. All officers retiring before enactment of the Police Retirement Act will receive the retirement benefits at the current level. Only officers retiring after this legislation is passed would be eligible for the increased annuity.

There was no intention to leave police officers worse off than firefighters in this city. Police officers should not have lower retirement pay because their collective bargaining agreement was negotiated at a low point in the city's financial picture, while the firefighters got in just under the wire. At a time when Chief Charles Ramsey is upgrading the quality of police officers, and even bringing in experienced officers on a lateral basis, we need true equity if we want a first-class police department. The retirement pay differential may be an anomaly, but its resulting unfairness hurts not only individual officers but public safety in the city. The city is willing to pay its share to correct this inequity. The Congress must do the same.

I would like to thank Representative TOM DAVIS, Chairman of the District of Columbia Subcommittee, Representatives STENY HOYER, CONNIE MORELLA, and AL WYNN for being original cosponsors of this bill to restore basic parity to the retirements of District police officers and firefighters, and urge swift passage.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2000

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I was absent and unable to vote from March 21, 2000 to March 24, 2000 because I accompanied the President of the United States on his historic visit to India and Pakistan.

On March 21, 2000:

I would have voted in favor of H. Con. Res. 288 (Roll Call number 56).

I would have voted in favor of H. Res. 182 (Roll Call number 57).

On March 22, 2000:

I would have voted in favor of approving the journal (Roll Call number 58).

I would have voted against on ordering the Previous Question H. Res. 444 (Roll Call number 59).

I would have voted against on agreeing to the Resolution H. Res. 444 (Roll Call number 60).

I would have voted against considering S. 1287 (Roll Call number 61).

I would have voted in favor of recommitting S. 1287 with Instructions (Roll Call number 62).

I would have voted against S. 1287 (Roll Call number 63).

I would have voted against ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 445 (Roll Call number 64).

I would have voted for passage of H.R. 3822 (Roll Call number 65).

March 23, 2000:

I would have voted in favor of approving the Journal (Roll Call number 66).

I would have voted against the previous question on H. Res. 446 (Roll Call number 67).

I would have voted against the amended H. Res. 446 (Roll Call number 68).

I would have voted against the motion to rise on H. Con. Res. 290 (Roll Call number 69).

I would have voted in favor of the Owens substitute to H. Con. Res. 290 (Roll Call number 70).

I would have voted in favor of the DeFazio substitute to H. Con. Res. 290 (Roll Call number 71).

I would have voted in favor of the Stenholm substitute to H. Con. Res. 290 (Roll Call number 72).

I would have voted against Sununu amendment to H. Con. Res. 290 (Roll Call number 73).

I would have voted in favor of the Spratt substitute to H. Con. Res. 290 (Roll Call number 74).

March 24, 2000:

I would have voted against H. Con. Res. 290 (Roll Call number 75).